

REMARKS

Claims 2-12 have been amended to overcome the objection stated by the Examiner. A clean copy of claims 1-12, as amended, is included herewith.

In the Office Action mailed October 12, 2000, the Examiner has made four double patenting rejections of Claims 1 - 12.

These double patenting rejections are made on the basis of:

U.S. Patent 5,582,266 Claims 1-23

U.S. Patent 5,673,769 Claims 1-7

U.S. Patent 5,848,665 Claims 1-9

U.S. Patent 6,076,448 Claims 7-9

The filing date of this application is November 18, 1998. The issue dates of the first two patents stated above as the basis for a double patenting rejection are more than one year before the filing date of this application.

Accordingly, clarification is requested as to the basis for rejection of the claims of this application on double patenting on the basis of U.S. Patent 5,582,266 , Claims 1-23, and U.S. Patent 5,673,769, Claims 1-7 or advice on whether this rejection should be based on 35 U.S.C. 102 or 103.

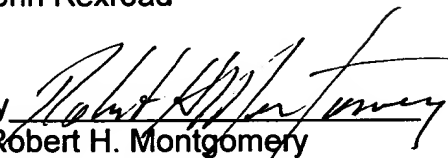
Applicant will execute any necessary terminal disclaimer to overcome a valid rejection(s) on the basis of double patenting. However, in the case of the first two cited references the Examiner should consider whether a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102 or 103 would be in order for first consideration.

Clarification on this point is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,
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